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H. Cultural Studies Pd. 1

10 March 2015

Reflection Answers

1. *Why did the British want to control India and how did they gain control?*

Britain quickly turned their interests from trade to conquer. In 1600, Britain set up the British East India Company. They traded textiles with the Mughals. As the Mughal empire went into decline in the 1700s, the B.E.I.C. gained more control. During this decline, Britain and France fought fiercely to gain control of the numerous small kingdoms. By 1760, Britain had gained control. They wanted control mainly because of the riches India offered, such as silk, rubies, and spices.

2. *Did British and B.E.I.C. rule hurt or help India's development? Defend your answer with examples and inferences from the text.*

In my opinion, the British rule was harmful to India's development. Like most imperialistic situations, mercantilism was the driving force behind Britain's interest in India. The B.E.I.C. forced Indian rulers to individually sign over their power in a series of treaties. The B.E.I.C. collected taxes from the Indian people, and set up courts and laws to protect their own interests. With this overbearing presence, India went from a strong empire to a crippled state. Britain took steps to check the B.E.I.C.'s power, but it wasn't until the Sepoy Rebellion that real opposition to the B.E.I.C. came.

3. *What goals did Indian nationalists have and how did the opposition to British rule become divided?*

Their constitutional demands were:

Abolition of the India Council.

Expansion of the legislative council and Legislative Assemblies, both Central and Provincial.

Increase in the membership of Indians by including some members elected by local bodies like chambers of commerce, universities, etc. in these councils and by giving greater powers to them.

They demanded Indian control over the public purse and raised the slogan "No taxation without representation".

By the beginning of the 20th century, they demanded for Swaraj (self-rule) within the British Empire similar to the self-governing colonies in Canada and Australia.

Adequate representation of Indians in the executive council of the Viceroy and those of the governors.

Some nationalists wanted to adopt western ways. Other's wanted to modernize India. Some wanted to Hindu traditions; they wanted to build a new India that blended Hindu traditions with Western culture. Muslim nationalists groups appeared after Hindu nationalism grew, but didn't have many unique goals of their own.